

**Interview with Jacqueline Lane
conducted by Linda Byrne for the
Providence District History Project Providence Perspective**

June 22, 2010

Linda: Today is June 22nd 2010, and I am Linda Byrne and I am here with Jacqueline Lane at her home on 2828 Chain Bridge Road and I see here that your mailing address is Vienna but really we consider you Oakton, Virginia.

Jacqueline: That is right because we are really out of the town limits of Vienna, but our mail comes from the Vienna Post Office. We are at the tail end of it. It comes from this house and comes down Hill Road, that is it and it turns around and comes back.

Linda: Jackie just took me for a nice little walk around the area here and it was lovely. If you could kind of reconstruct, you were showing me two houses that faced onto Chain Bridge and if you could tell me a little more about those two houses that were built in the?

Jackie: Well the houses that we are talking about were built in the 1930's. The farm house which is the middle house was built before that, that was an older house and of all these three properties are about 15 acres for those three acres about the time we came here. They had been farms so there were the remains of corn fields, fields that had been tilled and had been going to grass. Now as you can see they have all been grown up with tall trees waving high above your head but it was not that way it was simply a sunny field. People kept horses here so the man next door to us use to rent out his property and people boarded horse. We had horses here but you could ride from here all the way to Tyson's Corner and not be on the road. You could go back, you might have to go back across to Vale Road about where St. Mark's church is but they were just little tiny roads so there was no trouble, you could just ride back there.

Linda: Let's start back at the beginning, your childhood. Where did you grow up?

Jacqueline: I grew up in New Jersey, in Northern New Jersey which is a very nice place Bergen County and its history is in the Dutch Colonial period. So we had a lot of Dutch colonial houses and things that are interesting there.

Linda: Then how did you meet your husband?

Jacqueline: Well, after WWII we were both working in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) that is exactly where I met him and then since we worked at the CIA and my husband had a big dog and liked horses we decided to move to the country but it was a very fast commute. You could go down Chain Bridge and cross and go into Canal Road and at the foot of Canal Road is where the CIA office was so I think it took about 20 minutes.

Linda: How did you get from New Jersey down here to Fairfax County?

Jacqueline: I got a job at the CIA.

Linda: Can you talk about what you did there?

Jacqueline: Yes, I read Chinese newspapers and translated them, that was it.

Linda: I had a friend named Mary Ellen Williams who did the same kind of work at the CIA in the 1960's I am not sure what year.

Jacqueline: I was gone by the 1960's. I had my first baby in 1955 and that was the end of my working at the CIA.

Linda: So you have lived here in this house since?

Jacqueline: No we lived in the house up on the road; we did not build this house until 1959.

Linda: You mentioned to me when we were walking that you lived in McLean for a while?

Jacqueline: Yes before that we lived in McLean in a place called Ashgrove. That has all been developed. My goodness if we started talking about that, is that in Providence District?

Linda: No, it is in Drainsville District but please feel free to talk about it because -

Jacqueline: That is how I knew that the old Tyson's farmhouse where the three old men would sit on the porch. You would never drive by that corner without those three old men sitting there on that porch. Then it became, and opposite them they put in a frozen food meat locker and that is where the people eventually became St. Marks and is where they use to have mass and go to church on the second floor of the frozen food meat locker and that is before they moved, I guess the congregation got larger and moved to James Madison High School but lots of people will tell you about that because that is very well known.

Linda: Now tell me a little more about Oakton, the store and other things that were here when you moved here in the 1950's.

Jacqueline: Well right on the corner of the center of Oakton, you know a big Oak tree was there.

Linda: That was at the junction of Hunter Mill Road and Rt. 123.

Jacqueline: Yes, a great big Oak tree and there was another big Oak tree in front of Lindmore's Hardware Store, which was the most popular store in the area. Nothing was like it because it had hardware and fishing supplies. My sons use to like to go there on the way home from school and look at the fishing rods with bamboo poles and fish hooks and interesting flash lights, there were great things but, it was really a working hardware store. And on the corner of Hunter Mill Road and Chain Bridge as I was telling you before was Myers Market the site of the terrible murder, I told you about that earlier and when the ...

Linda: That would have been about what year, the murder?

Jacqueline: I am trying to think, it must have been about 40 or 45 years ago and I guess it made such an impression it was so horrid because we all knew Mr. Myers around the store. It was just people stopping by and robbing him and goodness he was anything but wealthy, but robbing him of the few dollars he might have had in his cash register, and hitting him and he was old and he died. Afterwards it was very pathetic because I would see...

Linda: And, there was another store E&O Market?

Jacqueline: Yes and there was a barber shop, it was a very nice place and everybody went to that barber shop my little boys went to that barber shop, my husband went to that barber shop. And next to it was the E&O Market which was kept by an Italian family and you could find anything in the world in the E&O Market. They had anything from rubber gloves to tenderloin steaks to any kind of canned goods and anything you could think of including frozen rabbits from the rabbits they raised in the back yard of the E&O where they had a garden and the rabbit cages.

That is about all there was, there was a wonderful Pear tree in front and other little private houses on the way, a Victorian House with a wonderful Magnolia – that was Oakton.

Linda: That would be as you were leaving your house here you would be walking across Hill Road on Rt. 123 and on up and the Victorian House would be on your right before you would get to the Market.

Jacqueline: Yes and then there was the small set as I said, first the barber shop, then the E&O Market then Lynn Moyers then Myers Market but I forgot across the road on the other side was where the Post Office was and there was a restaurant which was run for a while by the Massey's who lived below us between us and Vienna it was one of those houses on the left. There was a restaurant there and she was very famous for the wonderful pies she would make. I should tell you at Oakton Elementary School, talking about the pies makes me think there was a Mrs. Crable who would cook the school lunch and it would always include very good vegetables and a good soup. It was a very excellent lunch long before there were any projects or any programs to do it. She would simply cook lunch and then she would go around and encourage all the children to finish their plates and to finish their broccoli and vegetables. So I think the cost was 35 cents, I believe for lunch.

Linda: Now, you have five children you were telling me?

Jacqueline: That is right.

Linda: Tell me about your children growing up.

Jacqueline: They went to Oakton Elementary School and then later on to Oakton High School.

Linda: Was there an intermediate school or no, did they just go...

Jacqueline: Oh no.

Linda: So they went from elementary to high school.

Jacqueline: Actually my children weren't here during their middle school years. They went to elementary school here and high school here but in their middle school years they went to different schools, not here.

Linda: Now tell me the changes that you noticed over the years here.

Jacqueline: Well the biggest thing is the people and the kind of people. When we first came here it was all farmers or there was an iron monger, a man who worked at the Post Office and man who ran the restaurant that I spoke of but no one I could think of that commuted to Washington. Of course we were, my husband worked at the CIA then and I don't remember anyone in McLean there were people working in the CIA still going down to D.C., the big Langley building had not even been thought at that time, it was right at the edge of town. But, there were no commuters. And most of the people who lived here were not interested in Washington or the Federal affairs; they were just interested in Virginia and what was going on locally however.

Linda: Was the building here at Langley when you first started at CIA?

Jacqueline: No.

Linda: It was where?

Jacqueline: It was down at the foot of Canal Road, I think 26th Street I don't know.

Linda: It was probably a secret. (laughing)

Jacqueline: You were not supposed to say where you worked.

Linda: Right.

Jacqueline: None of my friends were supposed to know so if you couldn't say easily where you worked, they would just say "Oh you work at CIA, right".

Linda: So that building there at Langley opened in about?

Jacqueline: Well if you could imagine, again this is out of Providence District but driving through to it took us just about 20 minutes to get down the two lane Chain Bridge Road and buzz through McLean and just go right across the bridge to downtown. There was no traffic to speak of.

Linda: Do you remember when they made Rt. 123 four lanes?

Jacqueline: Yes, but I was busy doing something or taking care of the children or doing something and I didn't care much. There was no I66 and no Beltway and I guess I wasn't much interested. I do know that I had to go to Falls Church to do grocery shopping that was the closest.

Linda: So that would have been gosh, five or ten miles?

Jacqueline: No, Falls Church isn't ten miles but anyway since there was no traffic it was a very quick trip to Falls Church. I am always surprised now that it seems to take an hour or 50 minutes to go to places that I use to just dash over to the Co-Op in Falls Church.

Linda: What are some things that if people were moving to Providence District today some advice you might have for them?

Jacqueline: Well, we think it is a very beautiful place and we think the weather is mostly pleasant but very interesting and we have a great variety of outdoor activities that you do, planting gardens and it is I repeat a very pretty place. I think Virginia is a very wonderful place to live.

Linda: Well thank you I really appreciate this and if you can think of anything else that we have not included and would be important –

Jacqueline: I'll tell Carol. [Carol is the person who suggested Jacqueline be interviewed.]